

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1765

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, CA

SUBJ: CANADIAN DEFENSE REVIEW

1. DURING CONVERSATION ON APRIL 1, ACTING DEFENSE ADVISOR (CLINARE) REMARKED TO CANADIAN DELEGATION OFFICER (BECKETT, PLEASE PROTECT) THAT INFORMAL REPORTS ABOUT A CANADIAN DEFENSE REVIEW ARE CIRCULATING, AND ASKED WHETHER CANADIANS INTEND TO HOLD CONSULTATIONS ON THE SUBJECT WITH THEIR NATO ALLIE, BECKETT NOTED THAT HE HAD BEEN AWAY FROM BRUSSELS FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, AND THUS WAS NOT COMPLETELY UP TO SPEED, BUT MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. HE HESITATED TO DIGNIFY THE STUDY UNDERWAY IN OTTAWA WITH THE TERM "DEFENSE REVIEW" SINCE IT WAS NOT OF THAT BASIC OR FUNDAMENTAL A NATURE.

B. CANADIAN ARMED FORCES ARE NOW AT AN ACTUAL STRENGTH OF ABOUT 79,000 AS OPPOSED TO THEIR AUTHORIZED STRENGTH OF 85,000, AND HE SUSPECTS THAT THE DECISION HAS BEEN OR WILL BE MADE TO REMAIN AT CURRENT STRENGTH, BUT TO DO SO WITHOUT FANFARE.

C. HE BELIEVES THERE WILL BE NO CUTS IN OR RESTRUCTURING OF CANADIAN FORCES IN EUROPE.

D. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE SOME REDUCTIONS MADE IN
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CANADIAN ARMY PEACEKEEPING FORCES AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

E. IN THE EQUIPMENT AREA THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES FACE THREE MAJOR DECISIONS: (1) REPLACEMENT OF MARITIME PATROL

AIRCRAFT (BY BUYING EITHER P-3'S OR MODIFIED BOEING 707'S;
(2) REPLACEMENT OF F-104'S IN EUROPE AND F-101'S IN NORAD,
HOPEFULLY WITH A SINGLE AIRCRAFT; AND (3) WHETHER OR NOT
TO REPLACE CENTURION TANKS WHICH ARE WITH CANADIAN FORCES IN
EUROPE. BECKETT NOTED THAT THESE TANKS ARE BEING MODERNIZED,
AND SUSPECTED THAT REPLACEMENT DECISION WILL BE DEFERRED.

2. BECKETT EMPHASIZED THAT CANADIAN AMBASSADOR TO NATO MENZIES
IS SENSITIVE TO NEED FOR CONSULTATIONS IN FORCES FOR NATO
ARE TO BE AFFECTED BY STUDY UNDERWAY, AND HAS SEVERAL TIMES
WEIGHED IN WITH OTTAWA TO IMPRESS UPON THEM THAT IF CHANGES ARE
TO BE MADE WITH RESPECT TO CANADIAN FORCES IN EUROPE OR IN AUG-
MENTATION OR REINFORCEMENT FORCES FOR EUROPE, CONSULTATIONS IN
NATO SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WELL IN ADVANCE. BECKETT ADDED,
HOWEVER, THAT IF SUCH CHANGES ARE IN THE MAKING, CANADIAN DELE-
GATION AT NATO IS "IN BLISSFUL IGNORANCE"
OF THEM. PEREZ

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